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Employment Situation, December 1987

Maine Department of Labor

Maine Bureau of Employment Security

Maine Division of Economic Analysis and Research

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BATH-BRUNSWICK LABOR MARKET AREA

The unemployment rate in the Bath-Brunswick Labor Market Area (LMA) declined from 2.9 percent in November to 2.5 percent in December. The number unemployed dropped 100 to 840 in December, while resident employment declined from 28,080 to 27,960. The local unemployment rate remained lower than the State's rate of 3.5 percent and the Nation's rate of 5.4 percent. Employment increases in shipbuilding, electrical and electronic equipment, paper and allied products, and seasonal increases in retail trade offset a decline in government and a seasonal drop in construction. Last year at this time, the unemployment rate for the Bath-Brunswick LMA was 2.1 percent, with resident employment of 25,540 and unemployment at 560. On December 31, 1987, Congress Sportswear closed its Bath factory and outlet store. According to an article in the Brunswick Times Record on January 15, 1988, the firm has also filed for bankruptcy, citing foreign competition and the inability to compete with shopping malls as the reasons for closing. The firm, which manufactured and sold Maine Guide sportswear, had approximately 15 employees at the time of its closing.

BIDDEFORD LABOR MARKET AREA

Resident employment in the Biddeford Labor Market Area declined from the November level of 26,530 to 25,930 in December, while the total number unemployed increased from 620 to 730 during the same period. The changes were primarily due to seasonal layoffs in apparel, lumber and wood products, contract construction, and health services. Although the seasonal downturn is typical, most displaced job seekers have been absorbed by other industries in the area. Resident employment in the Biddeford LMA has moved upward steadily throughout the year, showing an overall increase of 3,740 from the 22,190 level recorded in January 1987.

The unemployment rate also edged upward between November and December, from 2.3 percent to 2.7 percent. Last December the unemployment rate was 4.2 percent. The current local rate of 2.7 percent remains below the State and national rates of 3.5 percent and 5.4 percent, respectively.

LEWISTON-AUBURN METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA

The unemployment rate in the Lewiston-Auburn Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) rose from 4.1 percent in November to 4.5 percent in December. This was the lowest December rate since 1968. Meanwhile, the State's unemployment rate remained at 3.5 percent for December, while the national rate dropped from 5.6 percent to 5.4 percent. From November to December, local resident employment rose 100 to 40,300, while unemployment rose 200 to 1,900. Employment declines in footwear; rubber and miscellaneous plastics products; personal services; business services; automotive repair, services, and garages; miscellaneous services; and seasonal losses in construction offset increases in electrical machinery and seasonal gains in retail trade. Local economic conditions in the MSA improved in 1987. Comparing 1986 with 1987 annual averages in the MSA, the unemployment rate dropped from 6.9 percent to 5.4 percent. The number of unemployed declined from 2,800 to 2,200, while resident employment increased from 37,500 to 38,700.

PORTLAND METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA

Resident employment in the Portland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) continued to move upward from 126,300 in November to 127,000 in December. Although modest increases in most industries and smaller than typical seasonal losses in others contributed to the overall strength of the trend, the increase was due primarily to Christmas season employment in wholesale and retail trade as end-of-year sales continued to reflect consumer confidence in the MSA economy. Neither the total number unemployed nor the unemployment rate changed between November and December. Unemployment held steady at the November level of 2,400, while the unemployment rate remained at 1.9 percent over the month. The unemployment rate for last December was 2.0 percent. The current local rate of 1.9 percent for December remained well below both the State and national rates of 3.5 percent and 5.4 percent, respectively. This December reflected a different employment situation than those of past winters, when seasonal declines in manufacturing and contract construction caused higher unemployment levels in the MSA. Contrary to past trends, employers appear to be holding workers in place. For example, during winter, unemployment associated with contract construction is traditionally high, but because of the large number of projects in progress, or scheduled to begin in 1988, there have been comparatively few job losses in the industry. Work tasks have either shifted indoors for the winter, or new technologies are being used to continue with outside work ordinarily prohibited by cold temperatures.

RUMFORD LABOR MARKET AREA

Unemployment in the Rumford Labor Market Area (LMA) rose from 330 in November to 370 in December, causing the unemployment rate to increase from 3.8 percent to 4.1 percent. Layoffs in leather and leather products, lumber and wood products, and construction led to an increase in the number unemployed. Resident employment also rose, from 8,410 in November to 8,550 in December. Seasonal gains in retail trade were primarily responsible for the increase in employment. Last year at this time, 520 people were out of work, and the unemployment rate was 6.4 percent. In an effort to attract more business, the Town of Rumford is attempting to develop 88 acres of town-owned land into an industrial park. According to John Madigan, Town Manager, no firms have committed to move to the industrial park, but negotiations are continuing.

WATERVILLE LABOR MARKET AREA

Manufacturing employment gains helped to lessen the impact of normal seasonal losses in the Waterville Labor Market Area in December. Employment increased in paper and allied products, apparel, lumber and wood products, and food and kindred products. These gains, combined with a seasonal increase in retail trade employment, more than offset seasonal losses in construction, nondomestic services, and agriculture. Resident employment rose from 22,700 in November to 22,920 in December, while the number unemployed rose from 850 to 860. The unemployment rate remained unchanged at 3.6 percent. The local December unemployment rate was just above the statewide rate of 3.5 percent, but well below the national rate of 5.4 percent. Last year at this time, the local unemployment rate was 4.8 percent.



CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE BY MAINE LABOR MARKET AREA, NEW ENGLAND STATES, AND THE UNITED STATES ^{1/}

AREAS	LABOR FORCE ^{2/}			RESIDENT EMPLOYED			UNEMPLOYMENT			UNEMPLOYMENT RATE		
	Dec. 87	Nov. 87	Dec. 86	Dec. 87	Nov. 87	Dec. 86	Dec. 87	Nov. 87	Dec. 86	Dec. 87	Nov. 87	Dec. 86
MAINE-Statewide	600.1	601.4	556.6	578.8	580.4	532.6	21.3	21.0	24.0	3.5	3.5	4.3
MAJOR LABOR MARKETS												
Bangor MSA	43,300	43,200	40,600	42,000	42,000	38,800	1,300	1,200	1,800	3.0	2.8	4.4
Lawiston-Auburn MSA	42,200	41,900	40,200	40,300	40,200	38,000	1,900	1,700	2,200	4.5	4.1	5.5
Portland MSA	129,400	128,700	119,500	127,000	126,300	117,100	2,400	2,400	2,400	1.9	1.9	2.0
Portsmouth-Dover-Rochester MSA ^{3/}	n/a	131,700	126,200	n/a	129,400	123,200	n/a	2,300	3,000	n/a	1.7	2.4
OTHER LABOR MARKETS												
Augusta	33,580	33,710	31,390	32,440	32,590	30,170	1,140	1,120	1,220	3.4	3.3	3.9
Bath-Brunswick	28,680	28,920	26,100	27,960	28,080	25,540	720	840	560	2.5	2.9	2.1
Belfast	11,170	10,880	10,340	10,280	10,310	9,500	890	570	840	8.0	5.2	8.1
Biddeford	26,660	27,150	24,480	25,930	26,530	23,440	730	620	1,040	2.7	2.3	4.2
Boothbay Harbor-Wiscasset	12,710	13,180	11,250	12,240	12,660	10,710	470	520	540	3.7	3.9	4.8
Calais-Eastport	14,040	14,290	12,780	13,010	13,240	11,840	1,030	1,050	940	7.3	7.3	7.4
Caribou-Presque Isle	23,270	23,210	20,890	21,550	21,540	19,290	1,720	1,670	1,600	7.4	7.2	7.7
Central Penobscot	2,800	2,880	2,610	2,680	2,760	2,460	120	120	150	4.3	4.2	5.7
Dover-Foxcroft	6,660	6,690	6,670	6,390	6,390	6,240	270	300	430	4.1	4.5	6.4
Ellsworth	22,470	23,290	20,500	21,330	21,940	19,250	1,140	1,350	1,250	5.1	5.8	6.1
Farmington	12,500	12,270	12,120	12,020	11,670	11,470	480	600	650	3.8	4.9	5.4
Fort Kent-Allagash	5,620	5,820	5,300	5,370	5,480	4,920	250	340	380	4.4	5.8	7.2
Greenville	1,320	1,310	1,230	1,220	1,250	1,120	100	60	110	7.6	4.6	8.9
Houlton	6,010	6,120	5,680	5,800	5,760	5,320	210	360	360	3.5	5.9	6.3
Kittery-York ^{3/}	30,380	30,300	28,120	29,990	29,970	27,760	390	330	360	1.3	1.1	1.3
Lincoln-Howland	5,340	5,330	5,160	5,100	5,120	4,920	240	210	240	4.5	3.9	4.7
Livermore Falls	4,430	4,670	4,390	4,150	4,320	4,090	280	350	300	6.3	7.5	6.8
Madawaska-Van Buren	3,760	3,740	3,610	3,430	3,460	3,250	330	280	360	8.8	7.5	10.0
Millinocket-East Millinocket	4,360	4,240	4,220	4,060	4,070	3,970	300	170	250	6.9	4.0	5.9
Norway-Paris	12,100	12,110	11,090	11,700	11,710	10,590	400	400	500	3.3	3.3	4.5
Patten-Island Falls	2,510	2,460	2,400	2,340	2,340	2,230	170	120	170	6.8	4.9	7.1
Rockland	18,510	18,700	16,240	17,960	18,190	15,550	550	510	690	3.0	2.7	4.2
Rumford	8,920	8,740	8,070	8,550	8,410	7,550	370	330	520	4.1	3.8	6.4
Sanford	16,600	16,740	15,230	16,160	16,260	14,530	440	480	700	2.7	2.9	4.6
Sebago Lakes Region	12,220	12,460	10,990	11,950	12,160	10,690	270	300	300	2.2	2.4	2.7
Skowhegan	24,470	24,440	22,430	23,220	23,270	21,040	1,250	1,170	1,390	5.1	4.8	6.2
Southwest Penobscot	10,470	10,500	10,270	9,830	9,860	9,530	640	640	740	6.1	6.1	7.2
Waterville	23,780	23,550	22,860	22,920	22,700	21,770	860	850	1,090	3.6	3.6	4.8
OTHER NEW ENGLAND STATES												
Connecticut	n/a	1,796.5	1,777.2	n/a	1,739.8	1,715.9	n/a	56.7	61.3	n/a	3.2	3.4
Massachusetts	3,075.0	3,085.0	3,055.9	2,993.0	3,013.0	2,960.5	81.0	72.0	95.4	2.6	2.3	3.1
New Hampshire	593.1	591.3	565.9	580.0	578.0	551.8	13.1	13.3	14.1	2.2	2.2	2.5
Rhode Island	531.2	530.4	519.7	512.4	514.0	500.2	18.8	16.4	19.5	3.5	3.1	3.7
Vermont	302.8	297.0	296.8	292.2	286.8	283.5	10.7	10.2	13.3	3.5	3.4	4.5
NEW ENGLAND STATES	n/a	6,901.6	6,772.1	n/a	6,712.0	6,544.5	n/a	189.6	227.6	n/a	2.7	3.4
UNITED STATES ^{4/}	120,206	120,611	118,049	113,679	113,809	110,588	6,526	6,802	7,461	5.4	5.6	6.3

MSA Metropolitan Statistical Area

Note: n/a indicates that the information was not available at the time of printing. Employment and unemployment may not add to labor force due to rounding.

Footnotes

^{1/} Labor force, employment, and unemployment data for all areas not seasonally adjusted. Estimates made independently for each labor market area have been benchmarked to and extrapolated from the Current Population Survey estimates for the state. All data adjusted to place of residence basis. Excludes members of the Armed Forces.

^{2/} Current and last month figures preliminary; year ago figures revised.

^{3/} Kittery-York is the eight town Maine portion of the Portsmouth-Dover-Rochester MSA which includes towns in both Maine and New Hampshire.

^{4/} National estimates based on a sample of household visits; state estimates based on enlargements of employment figures reported.

THESE DATA ARE DEVELOPED BY THE MAINE BUREAU OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY IN COOPERATION WITH THE U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS.

Labor Market Information Services



EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

STATISTICAL
DATA
SERIES: ES-12-87

DECEMBER 1987

SUPPLEMENT TO THE STATEWIDE MONTHLY NEWS RELEASE

A BRIEF ANALYSIS COVERING SELECTED MAINE LABOR MARKET AREAS

AUGUSTA LABOR MARKET AREA

Following historical trends, employment dropped slightly in December in the Augusta Labor Market Area. Resident employment fell from 32,590 in November to 32,440 in December, while the number unemployed rose slightly to 1,140 from 1,120. The resultant unemployment rate was 3.4 percent, up from 3.3 percent in November. A year ago the unemployment rate was somewhat higher at 3.9 percent. At that time, 1,220 residents were unemployed, while 30,170 were employed. This December the local unemployment rate was lower than both the national rate of 5.4 percent and the statewide rate of 3.5 percent. Nonfarm employment levels were mixed, with manufacturing employment advancing and nonmanufacturing employment undergoing seasonal losses. Within manufacturing, gains were recorded in textiles and paper and allied products. In the nonmanufacturing sector, employment losses in construction and services more than offset seasonal employment gains in retail trade.

BANGOR METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA

Resident employment in the Bangor Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) remained unchanged at 42,000 between November and December, while unemployment rose slightly from 1,200 to 1,300. The resultant unemployment rate of 3.0 percent was 0.2 percentage points above the area's November rate. The December unemployment rate in the Bangor MSA remained below both the State and national rates of 3.5 percent and 5.4 percent, respectively. A year ago, 38,800 residents were employed, and 1,800 were unemployed. At that time, the unemployment rate stood at 4.4 percent. Between November and December this year, employment in manufacturing declined slightly, with losses occurring in petroleum and coal products and stone, clay, and glass products. Some improvement occurred in paper and allied products and leather and leather products. In nonmanufacturing, employment gains in transportation and public utilities, wholesale and retail trade, and nondomestic services were not large enough to offset losses in contract construction and government.

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CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE BY MAINE COUNTY

STATISTICAL DATA SERIES: CCLF 12-87

COUNTY ^{1/}	CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE ^{2/}			UNEMPLOYMENT			RATE			RESIDENT EMPLOYED		
	Dec. 87	Nov. 87	Dec. 86	Dec. 87	Nov. 87	Dec. 86	Dec. 87	Nov. 87	Dec. 86	Dec. 87	Nov. 87	Dec. 86
ANDROSCOGGIN	48,890	48,750	46,580	2,210	2,080	2,520	4.5	4.3	5.4	46,680	46,670	44,060
AROOSTOOK	40,410	40,620	37,130	2,640	2,740	2,800	6.5	6.7	7.5	37,770	37,880	34,330
CUMBERLAND	138,770	138,410	127,730	2,670	2,800	2,500	1.9	2.0	2.0	136,100	135,610	125,230
FRANKLIN	12,500	12,270	12,120	480	600	650	3.8	4.9	5.4	12,020	11,670	11,470
HANCOCK	22,470	23,290	20,500	1,140	1,350	1,250	5.1	5.8	6.1	21,330	21,940	19,250
KENNEBEC	55,730	55,640	52,760	1,940	1,920	2,270	3.5	3.5	4.3	53,790	53,720	50,490
KNOX	16,450	16,630	14,480	480	450	650	2.9	2.7	4.5	15,970	16,180	13,830
LINCOLN	15,310	15,800	13,520	550	590	600	3.6	3.7	4.4	14,760	15,210	12,920
OXFORD	23,330	23,220	21,220	780	750	1,050	3.3	3.2	4.9	22,550	22,470	20,170
PENOBSCOT	65,700	65,640	62,310	2,590	2,360	3,130	3.9	3.6	5.0	63,110	63,280	59,180
PISCATAQUIS	7,980	7,990	7,910	370	360	540	4.6	4.5	6.8	7,610	7,630	7,370
SAGadahoc	15,070	15,190	13,720	400	450	300	2.7	3.0	2.2	14,670	14,740	13,420
SOMERSET	24,470	24,440	22,430	1,250	1,170	1,390	5.1	4.8	6.2	23,220	23,270	21,040
WALDO	12,430	12,140	11,560	930	610	930	7.5	5.0	8.0	11,500	11,530	10,630
WASHINGTON	14,040	14,290	12,780	1,030	1,050	940	7.3	7.3	7.4	13,010	13,240	11,840
YORK	86,590	87,090	79,860	1,850	1,690	2,520	2.1	1.9	3.2	84,740	85,400	77,340

^{1/} Labor force, employment, and unemployment data are not seasonally adjusted. All data are on a place of residence basis. Members of the armed forces are excluded.

^{2/} Current and last month figures preliminary; year ago figures revised.

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